



**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

SAHELIAN AFRICA – Locust Emergency

Situation Report #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2004

September 21, 2004

BACKGROUND

During July and August of 2003, favorable climatic conditions resulted in increased locust breeding levels throughout the Sahel. The density of the swarms increased during October and November in Mauritania, Mali, and Niger, and the locusts became gregarious. With an average life span of four months, the gregarious females can lay eggs three times more frequently than solitary locusts. The locusts matured from July to October in Mali and Niger, and then moved on to the Maghreb for a second breeding cycle from December 2003 to March 2004. In April, the first swarms of desert locusts moved from the spring breeding grounds in Morocco and Algeria to the Sahel. With intensive control operations, the situation in Northwest Africa has improved and only residual locust populations remain in Morocco and Algeria, according to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). However, in late June, the swarms that had moved southward laid eggs in Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, and Niger. These swarms are highly mobile and are difficult to spray before maturation. The current rainy season is providing the locusts with ideal survival and breeding conditions, and an even greater number of swarms are expected to arrive from the north and west. The current locust outbreak is the worst since 1987-89, which required an international donor outlay of approximately \$300 million.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE	SOURCE
Area at Risk	3 – 4 million hectares (ha) [Crop and pasture land]
Pesticide Treated Area	300,000 ha
	FAO – September 2004
	FAO – September 2004

Total FY 2004 USAID/OFDA Assistance (To Date).....\$1,550,000
Total FY 2004 USG Humanitarian Assistance (To Date).....\$4,301,000

CURRENT SITUATION

General situation. The desert locust situation continues to worsen across the Sahel, where widespread breeding is underway. Swarms have been reported in southern Mauritania, western and northern Mali, northern and central Senegal, western Niger, northern Burkina Faso, and northeastern Chad. To date, locusts have infested approximately 2.5 million ha in the Sahel and significant swarms are expected to form during late September and October. Mauritania and Mali are the most affected countries, with extensive crop damage.

Impact on harvest. Favorable climatic conditions in the region may result in a second year of above average harvest. However, on September 9, following a three-day meeting in Dakar, the Inter-state Committee to Fight Drought in the Sahel (CILSS) reported that up to 25 percent of the region’s 2004 crop is at risk of being destroyed by locusts. CILSS also predicted (in the absence of a locust infestation) a good 2004 harvest. In 2003 grain harvest in the Sahel reached 14 million metric tons (MT).

However, the locusts are breeding rapidly and extensively due to the favorable climatic conditions and the first generation summer swarms will likely coincide with the harvests of millet, sorghum, corn, and groundnuts as well as the plantation of irrigated rice in the Sahel. Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, and Niger face the greatest risk of severe locust damage to this year’s grain harvest if the situation is not brought under control, according to both FAO and CILSS.

Impact on lives and livelihoods. The potential ramifications of a large-scale locust infestation on the lives and livelihoods in the affected countries and the region as a whole are grave. FAO has warned of severe food insecurity if control operations are not increased to combat the swarms, which are interrupting the current planting season. According to the U.N. Children’s Fund (UNICEF), agriculture employs 80 percent of the working population in the affected countries, with the exception of Niger and Senegal. The combined loss of employment and food insecurity has lead in some countries to rural migration to urban centers. Although the impact of the present locust situation on malnutrition levels cannot be determined at present, many children in the region are already

suffering from malnutrition, making the potential impact life-threatening, according to UNICEF.

Mauritania. Locusts have affected approximately 1.6 million ha in Mauritania causing national agricultural experts to warn of a major food crisis due to the extensive crop damage. Mauritanian officials predict that thousands will be dependant on food assistance by November. The U.N. World Food Program (WFP) has already warned of a potential food crisis in the country, which only manages to grow one third of the food needed to feed the population in a good year, according to agricultural experts. The Ministry of Agriculture estimates that up to 40 percent of crops and 60 percent of pastures could be lost in the most affected areas (east and southeast). The current locust emergency follows a severe drought during 2002-2003, and some farmers have begun to abandon their fields, beginning a potential wave of migration to urban centers. Control operations treated more than 44,000 ha from September 1-10, but parts of the country are completely inaccessible to ground treatment teams. Additionally, treatment operations have been hindered by a shortage of pesticides.

Mali. Locusts threaten two thirds of the country above the 14th parallel. Controlling the outbreak in an area between the 14th and the 17th parallel, which produces up to 40 percent of Mali's agricultural production and contains two thirds of all livestock, is essential. The Ministry of Agriculture has deployed 28 teams, including 4 from Algeria, in order to halt the invasion. However, six teams are handicapped by a lack of resources, including pesticide. While control operations treated 16,403 ha during August, more than more than 37,000 ha were treated from September 1-10.

Senegal. To date, more than 45 percent of the infested land (110,302 ha) in Senegal has been treated with pesticides. Control operations treated more than 46,000 ha from September 1-10, and the Government of Senegal has mobilized army teams to combat the locust invasion.

Niger. As of September 7, locusts have reportedly affected 1.3 million ha in Niger. Despite the presence of swarms, no crop or pasture damage has been reported to date. Many farmers have begun to harvest crops early to prevent destruction by the locusts. However, many herders have lost access to their pastures due to both local drought conditions and the ongoing pesticide treatment programs. The Government of Niger is actively organizing control operations, and there are currently 26 land teams and 2 aerial teams treating infested areas. By the end of August, approximately 7,252 ha had been treated. Control operations treated approximately 27,000 ha from September 1-10.

Burkina Faso. New swarms of locusts have entered from Mali and reinfested previously treated areas (425 ha). The northern provinces of Soum and Oudalam are affected by locust infestations. Heavy rainfall has prevented access to some areas, and the Government of Burkina Faso is negotiating with neighboring countries for air treatment capabilities.

Cape Verde. Several swarms arrived in Cape Verde, but no breeding was reported. According to WFP, interventions conducted in Cape Verde during August have eliminated all imminent locust threats to crops. In total, 160 ha had been treated with pesticides as of September 15.

Forecast. According to a September 15 FAO report, a significant number of swarms are likely to reinvade Northwest Africa between October and March. The scale of this invasion will depend on the success of current control operations and the frequency of rainfall in the coming months. Swarms are also expected to form in West Africa during September and October, with large concentrations in Mauritania.

Regional treatment overview. According to the Commission de Lutte Contre le Criquet Pelerine dans la Region Occidentale (CLCPRO), 4.3 million ha need to be treated with pesticides in the coming months to control the locusts and minimize crop damage. However, as of the end of August, only 100,000 ha, less than 3 percent of the total surface area requiring spraying, had been treated. On September 15, FAO reported that approximately 300,000 ha had been treated in West Africa. Countries in the region estimate that more than 4 million liters of pesticides are needed for effect control operations, according to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). FAO is in the process of procuring pesticides and equipment to enhance control efforts. As of September 13, FAO reported that 757,000 liters of pesticides are either in the region or in the pipeline.

Response Efforts. Countries in northern and northwestern Africa continue to make significant contributions, including pesticides, vehicles, technical assistance, and communication and spray equipment to combat the regional locust threat. President Wade of Senegal organized a conference in Dakar at the end of August to coordinate the regional response to the locust emergency. During the conference, the agricultural ministers agreed to establish regional bases in Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Chad, and Niger. In addition, the ministers agreed to establish sub-regional offices in Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, and Guinea Bissau.

As there are no reliable crop damage estimates to date, WFP plans to conduct needs assessments to determine the extent of crop damage and corresponding food assistance requirements in October. To respond to FAO's appeal, international donors, including USAID, have contributed close to \$45 million of the estimated \$100 million needed to combat the locust infestation.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

In response to the current locust upsurge affected the Sahel, major donors including USAID have adopted a regional strategy to channel funding for the locust emergency through FAO's appeal. FAO is the designated international lead on emergency transboundary pest outbreaks. FAO also coordinates closely with USAID/OFDA's Assistance for Emergency Locust/Grasshopper Abatement (AELGA) project

to identify appropriate activities that USG funding can support.

USAID has provided \$3.6 million through FAO to combat the locust emergency. USAID/OFDA was one of the first donors to make a significant contribution to the locust control campaign in the amount of \$1.5 million to FAO. This amount includes \$1million earmarked for Sahelian West Africa (Mauritania, Mali, Senegal, Niger and Chad).

To date in FY 2004, USAID’s Bureau for Africa (USAID/AFR) has provided \$800,000 to FAO. In addition, USAID/AFR has provided 651,000 to the USAID Mission in Senegal for response activities in Senegal and Mauritania.

USAID’s Bureau of Asia and the Near East (USAID/ANE) has provided \$200,000 to FAO. USAID/Mali has also

provided \$1.1 million through FAO to support regional locust control efforts.

On April 14, 2004, U.S. Ambassador LeBaron issued a disaster declaration for the locust outbreak in Mauritania, which affected the regions of Adrar, Dakhlet Nouadhibou, Tiris Zemmour, and Inchiri. On April 15, 2004, U.S. Ambassador Riley issued a disaster declaration due to the locust outbreak in Morocco. In response to both, USAID/OFDA providing \$500,000 to FAO for continued locust prevention and response activities region-wide.

On September 2, 2004, Ambassador Huddleston issued a disaster declaration due to the locust emergency affecting Mali. In response, USAID/OFDA provided \$50,000 through USAID/Mali to support the Government of Mali’s special account for combating the locust infestation.

U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO COMBAT LOCUSTS

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
FAO	Locust Response	Regional	\$1,500,000
USAID/Mali	Pesticides and related control activities	Mali	\$50,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA			\$1,550,000
USAID/AFR ASSISTANCE			
FAO	Locust Response	Regional	\$800,000
USAID/Senegal	Locust Response	Senegal and Mauritania	\$651,000
TOTAL USAID/AFR			\$1,451,000
USAID/ANE ASSISTANCE			
FAO	Locust Response	Regional	\$200,000
TOTAL USAID/ANE			\$200,000
USAID/Mali ASSISTANCE			
FAO	Locust Response	Regional	\$1,100,000
TOTAL USAID/Mali.....			\$1,100,000
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO COMBAT LOCUSTS IN FY 2004			\$4,301,000



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